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INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE FOR
THE ELABORATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION
TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION IN THOSE COUNTRIES
EXPERIENCING SERIOUS DROUGHT AND/OR
DESERTIFICATION, PARTICULARLY IN AFRICA
Seventh session
Nairobi, 7-18 August 1995
Agenda item 5

REVIEW OF THE SITUATION AS REGARDS EXTRABUDGETARY FUNDS

Note by the Secretariat

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. By its Resolution 47/188 of 22 December 1992, the General Assembly established a Special Voluntary Fund and a Trust Fund, both administered by the Head of the Ad Hoc Secretariat under the authority of the Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN). These funds were established with a view:

- (a) to assist developing countries affected by desertification and drought, in particular the least developed countries, to participate fully and effectively in the negotiation process; and
- (b) to supplement limited regular budget resources in financing the negotiating process.

2. Subsequently, Resolution 49/234 of 23 December 1994 adopted by the 49th Session of the General Assembly extended the mandate of these funds for the interim period. It also amended the terms of reference of the INCD Trust Fund to take into consideration the recommendations of the Committee regarding the participation of NGOs in its sessions.

3. This document reviews pledges and contributions made to both INCD funds. As the Committee requested at its Sixth Session, it also summarizes the Secretariat's utilization of UN regular budget resources during the biennium 1994-1995.

II. REGULAR BUDGET RESOURCES

4. Regular budget resources are used essentially to cover expenses related to staff, travel, communications and consultancies, as well as standard operating expenses such as maintenance and supplies. Appendix A shows the Secretariat's total regular budget allotment for the biennium 1994-1995 by object of expenditure. Appendix B shows regular budget expenditures during the biennium through May 1995.

5. Various expenditures on staff covered the services of the 5 professional and 4 general service posts carried under the Regular Budget (1 D-2, 1 D-1, 1 P-5, 1 P-4, 1 P-3 and 4 GS).

6. For the biennium 1994-1995 an allotment of US\$ 236,900 was issued for official travel of staff. The bulk of this allotment was used for the participation of the Secretariat staff in the Third, Fifth and Sixth sessions of the INCD, held respectively in New York, Paris and New York.

7. Consultancy resources were mainly used for meetings and services of the International Panel of Experts on Desertification. Consultants were also employed in 1995 for the organization and promotion of awareness and information campaigns as well as for ad hoc activities for which the relevant expertise was not available within the Secretariat.

8. In this regard, the Secretariat launched, with the assistance of "Earth Action", an experienced International NGO, media and parliamentary campaigns. The cost of these two campaigns was roughly US\$ 54,000. They took place prior to the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought, targeting journalists and parliamentarians worldwide to draw their attention to the problem of desertification and to the innovative approach adopted by the Convention.

III. TRUST FUND

9. The General Assembly, by its Resolution 47/188, paragraph 13, decided that the "negotiating process shall be funded through existing UN Budgetary Resources, without negatively affecting its programmed activities, and through voluntary contributions to a Trust Fund established specifically to that purpose for the duration of the negotiations." It also urged "governments, and regional economic integration organizations to contribute generously to the Trust Fund."

10. The situation concerning pledges and contributions to the Trust Fund as of 30 June 1995 is shown in Appendix C.

11. As of May 1995, recorded expenditures from the Fund for the biennium 1994-1995 amounted to US\$ 2,031,295. After provision for support costs and operating reserve, the Fund is virtually exhausted. Trust Fund expenditures incurred in support of Secretariat activities are summarized in Appendix D.

12. The Secretariat has established contacts and concluded agreements with several countries, as well as with agencies of the United Nations system and intergovernmental organizations, to enlist their support for ongoing extrabudgetary activities in the following four fields, which the sections below summarize.

- (a) Organizations of national awareness seminars
- (b) Subregional consultation processes
- (c) Public information
- (d) Grass-roots implementation of the Convention

Organization of national awareness seminars

13. The Secretariat has facilitated the launching of national awareness seminars concerning the implementation of the Convention and the Resolution on Urgent Action for Africa. By promoting contacts between the various partners working at the national level, these seminars will facilitate the integration into the implementation process of institutions or organizations that may not yet be involved in it and encourage them to give it greater priority. As a presentation and exchange fora, these seminars can also provide the opportunity to bring together important actors in civil society, as well as field representatives of donor agencies.

14. Each seminar can be organized at a cost of roughly US\$ 8,000. In this respect, the Government of Switzerland has contributed US\$ 183,500 for the organization of national seminars in Africa. The Swiss contribution has allowed the launching of the seminars in a first group of twenty African countries. Based on a schedule agreed individually with each concerned country, and with the active support of relevant subregional organizations, as of 32 July, seminars would have been organized in the following countries:

April	Cape Verde, Eritrea
May	Burkina Faso, Chad, Egypt, Mauritania
June	Benin, Ethiopia, Morocco, Niger, Senegal, Zambia
July	Cote d'Ivoire, Sudan, Uganda

15. The Secretariat is discussing the modalities of financing further awareness seminars in Africa with other interested donor countries. If sufficient resources are available, the objective would be to hold such seminars in all countries that request them, in Africa as well as in other regions.

Subregional consultation processes

16. The subregional consultation processes take the form of seminars organized by a relevant subregional organization acting as coordinating agency with the support of the Secretariat. They bring together representatives of the governments of a given subregion, donor countries and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to discuss the implementation in the subregion of the Convention and of the INCED Resolution on Urgent Action in Africa.

They are organized in conjunction with a workshop that gathers media professionals of the same subregion.

17. These seminars and workshops will provide all parties involved with an opportunity to increase their level of knowledge about the Convention and to formulate a clear and common view of their obligations and respective roles. These fora will also allow participants to be informed of the latest developments regarding the Convention and their impact on activities in the subregion.

18. The terms of reference and goals of these seminars are presented in detail in a document prepared by the Secretariat. This document has already been sent to some donor countries and is available upon request.

19. The Government of Denmark has contributed US\$ 112,900 to the Trust Fund to help organize subregional consultations in East Africa and the Government of Norway US\$ 142,000 for those in Southern Africa. The Government of Canada has provided financing directly to Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) for the West African consultations.

Public information

20. The Secretariat, which faces an increasing demand for information, has launched the preliminary phase of an information programme. It is centered at this stage on the production and distribution of materials that facilitate implementation of the Convention. These materials will deliver to several different audiences unbiased and carefully balanced information on the various dimensions of the Convention in easily accessible language. The target audiences include national policy makers, development practitioners, economic and business leaders, NGOs, journalists and the public in general.

21. The aim is to create materials that are unique: they will have the credibility and the authority of the United Nations, they will be created and reviewed by leading experts in all relevant disciplines and they will be attractively packaged, well written and concise. These materials comprise the following, some of which will be packaged in a Convention kit.

- (a) The Convention text in an attractive booklet format, with an accompanying explanatory leaflet, in English, French, Arabic, Spanish and Portuguese
- (b) A simplified version of the Convention in a booklet entitled "Down to Earth", initially in English, French, Spanish and Arabic, but later in other languages including the languages most widely spoken in affected areas
- (c) Ten fact sheets covering the main aspects of the Convention and providing policy makers and other target audiences with greater access to high quality information, initially in French, English and Spanish
- (d) A slide presentation to assist in promotional activities for the ratification and implementation of the Convention
- (e) A "home page" on the Internet World Wide Web containing INCD documents and other materials related to the Convention

22. The official launching of the booklets coincided with the first celebration of the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought. On that occasion, the Secretariat also organized, in collaboration with the International Academy of the Environment, a policy dialogue that gathered 25 experts from all regions of the world to discuss the theme "Combatting Desertification Through Alternative Energy Strategies : A Focus on Africa."

23. In initiating its public information programme, the Secretariat utilized significant assistance from the governments of Switzerland and Denmark, as well

as from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Denmark contributed through the Trust Fund for the production of the Convention Kit and Convention Booklet. Switzerland, IFAD and UNEP contributed directly to the Center for Our Common Future, a Geneva-based international NGO, which supervised the writing, editing and production of the simplified version of the Convention. UNEP's Information Unit for Conventions also supervised and co-financed the initial production of the Convention booklet and explanatory leaflet in English, French and Arabic. It also made possible the initiation of a World Wide Web home page on desertification.

Grass-roots implementation of the Convention

24. IFAD has agreed to contribute US\$ 400,000 to the INCD Trust Fund. As indicated below, part of this contribution will be used for the recruitment of one general service staff member. The balance is earmarked for facilitation and coordination of activities related to the involvement of affected communities in the implementation of the Convention, as well as for promotion of initiatives for dissemination of information on its implementation. In addition, the Secretariat is in contact with several governments and organizations to obtain financing for NGO participation in INCD sessions.

25. In light of the discussion above and given the current status of the Fund, the INCD may wish to call upon potential donors to contribute to the Trust Fund and give further guidance to the Executive Secretary concerning its future use.

IV. SPECIAL VOLUNTARY FUND

26. The current status of pledges and receipts to the Special Voluntary Fund is shown in Appendix E. After provision for support costs and operating reserve, a balance of approximately US\$ 255,718 remains available in that Fund. In allocating the remaining funds, priority will continue to be given to least developed countries affected by drought and desertification. The Secretariat will circulate, during the session, as an addendum to this document, a list of countries whose participation has been financed through the Fund.

27. Two budget scenarios are possible for the Special Voluntary Fund, depending on the level of contributions. The first would fund the travel of one representative from approximately seventy affected developing countries to two INCD meetings per year at an annual cost of US\$900,000. The second, assuming insufficient contribution levels, would cover only one representative from least developed affected countries at an annual cost of US\$550,000.

28. In light of the above and given the current status of the Fund, the INCD may wish to call upon potential donors to contribute to the Special Voluntary Fund and give further guidance to the Executive Secretary concerning its future use.

V. SECRETARIAT STAFFING SITUATION

29. The staffing situation of the Secretariat, as of May 1995, is shown in Appendix F. It does not include consultants or temporary staff hired to assist the Secretariat during sessions of the Committee.

30. Contractual arrangements relating to the positions covered by the Trust Fund continue to be of a short-term nature owing to the uncertainty of funding. The extension of the contracts of the six staff members currently financed from extra-budgetary resources depends on the timely receipt of contributions.

31. The following information is of relevance to the staffing situation of the Secretariat:

- (a) FAO has extended the services of an Environmental Lawyer to assist the Secretariat on a part-time basis.

- (b) IFAD has approved a contribution of US\$ 400,000 to the Trust Fund. Part of this contribution will be earmarked for the recruitment of a General service staff member.
- (c) UNEP has earmarked US\$ 50,000 of its most recent contribution to the Trust Fund for general temporary assistance in the Secretariat.
- (d) Italy has recently confirmed its willingness to second a junior professional officer to the Secretariat, who will work for one year in the field of media and communications.
- (e) One temporary staff member has been recruited using Trust Fund resources to assist professional staff members in their daily work.

32. Administrative support to the Secretariat is provided by a Geneva based administrative unit of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development (DPCSD) consisting of one professional officer and two general service staff. The unit, which functions within the framework of the Executive Office of the Department located at United Nations Headquarters, New York, also serves the Interim Secretariat of the Convention on Climate Change. The recruitment of the head of this office was completed in May 1995.

33. The workload of this administrative unit in 1995 will tax its capacity, notably in relation to financial monitoring and support for travel arrangements before and during the sessions of the Committee. This problem is being addressed in consultation with DPCSD and with central administrative services at the United Nations Headquarters.

APPENDIX A

**TOTAL REGULAR BUDGET ALLOTMENTS FOR 1994 AND 1995
BY OBJECT OF EXPENDITURE
(US DOLLARS)**

OBJECT OF EXPENDITURE	TOTAL ALLOTMENT 1994-1995	TOTAL ALLOTMENT 1994*	TOTAL ALLOTMENT 1995
010 Established posts	1,594,900.00	835,500.00	739,400.00
040 Consultants	904,200.00	537,700.00	366,500.00
050 Overtime & night diff.	10,300.00	4,900.00	5,400.00
100 Common staff costs	511,100.00	277,900.00	233,200.00
113 Representation allowance	1,200.00	600.00	600.00
242 Other official travel of staff	236,900.00	123,500.00	113,400.00
434 Rent/maint. data proc. equipm.	28,500.00	13,600.00	14,900.00
440 Communications	78,100.00	37,400.00	40,700.00
451 Official functions	6,300.00	4,000.00	2,300.00
490 Miscellaneous services	12,600.00	10,100.00	2,500.00
500 Supplies and materials	16,000.00	10,200.00	5,800.00
610 Office furniture and equipment	9,000.00	8,300.00	700.00
620 Data processing equipment	39,500.00	31,700.00	7,800.00
	3,428,600.00	1,895,400.00	1,533,200.00

* As recorded in final 1994 allotment report

APPENDIX B

**TOTAL EXPENDITURES INCURRED IN 1994 AND 1995 IN THE REGULAR BUDGET
BY OBJECT OF EXPENDITURE
(US DOLLARS)**

OBJECT OF EXPENDITURE		TOTAL 1994-1995	TOTAL 1994	TOTAL JANUARY-MAY 1995
010	Established posts	1,200,209.27	913,536.40	286,672.87
030	Salary	2,275.19	-	2,275.19
040	Consultants	535,058.05	480,671.08	54,386.97
050	Overtime & night diff.	3,366.80	3,366.80	-
070	Temporary posts	587.26	587.26	-
085	Other indiv. pers serv. contracts	1,562.50	1,562.50	-
100	Common staff costs	547,892.25	408,162.79	139,729.46
113	Representation allowance	986.21	736.21	250.00
242	Other official travel of staff	244,669.22	130,547.51	114,121.71
413	Supplies, maint. of premises	44.14	44.14	-
430	Rent/maint. data proc. equipm.	16,506.44	15,841.75	664.69
440	Communications	103,710.75	84,259.12	19,451.63
451	Official functions	634.23	-	634.23
464	Maint. office automation equipment	255.60	255.60	-
490	Miscellaneous services	9,496.24	8,427.05	1,069.19
500	Supplies and materials	2,092.93	1,637.15	455.78
610	Office furniture and equipment	2,161.24	711.24	1,450.00
620	Data processing equipment	28,371.24	28,371.29	-0.05
695	Miscellaneous equipment	524.92	-	524.92
		2,700,404.48	2,078,717.89	621,686.59

APPENDIX C

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE TRUST FUND AS OF 30 JUNE 1995*
(US DOLLARS)

Donor Country/ Organisation	1993	1994	1995	Total
Australia	34,915	86,160		121,075
Canada	134,982	134,381	5,344	274,707
Cyprus	1,000			1,000
Denmark		200,000	211,500	411,500
Finland		89,522		89,522
France	105,542	30,362		135,904
Greece		5,000		5,000
Japan		123,300		123,300
Kenya		5,000		5,000
Netherlands	555,139			555,139
Norway	187,971	62,978	142,154	393,103
Sweden		128,287		128,287
Switzerland	125,310	456,626	196,750	778,686
Tunisia		2,000		2,000
U.S.A.	200,000	100,000		300,000
UNEP	300,000	50,000	80,000	430,000
TOTAL	1,644,859	1,473,616	635,748	3,754,223

* Does not include pledge of 50,000 Ecu from European Union not yet received

APPENDIX D

TRUST FUND EXPENDITURES FOR 1994-1995 AS OF 31 MAY 1995
(US Dollars)

Object code	Description	Expenditure
030	General Temporary Assistance	1,052,214
050	Overtime	7,650
060	Ad hoc expert group	33,906
210	Travel of participants	199,979
242	Other official travel of staff	259,338
300	Contractual services	25,000
440	Communication costs	3,784
600	Fellowships/grants/contributions	449,424
	Total	2,031,295
		=====

APPENDIX E
VOLUNTARY FUND CONTRIBUTION AS OF 30 JUNE 1995*
(US DOLLARS)

Donor Country	1993	1994	1995	Total
Australia		65,735		65,735
Austria		10,000		10,000
Benin		1,000		1,000
Canada	77,662		42,257	119,919
Denmark	199,985			199,985
France	103,999	50,020		154,019
Germany	185,827			185,827
Greece		5,000		5,000
Ireland		71,500		71,500
Italy	90,744			90,744
Japan		300,000		300,000
Korea		50,000		50,000
Norway	199,985	226,359		426,344
Portugal		15,000		15,000
Spain	42,024	10,000	26,479	78,503
Sweden	262,280			262,280
Switzerland	66,013			66,013
United Kingdom	161,727			161,727
TOTAL	1,390,246	804,614	68,736	2,263,596

* Does not include pledge of 50,000 Ecu from European Union not yet received

APPENDIX F

CCD SECRETARIAT STAFFING SITUATION AS OF 31 MAY 1995

	Regular Budget Provision to 31.12.1995	Other Sources		Total
D-2	1	0		1
D-1/L-6	1	0		1
P-5/L-5	1	1 1 1	Canada (to 15.8.95) Switzerland (to 30.4.95) WMO (to Dec 95)	4
P-4/L-4	1	0		1
P-3/L-3	1	1	Sweden (March 94 to Feb 95) with extension being processed	2
P-1/L-1	0	1	France (March 94 to Feb 95) and Trust Fund thereafter	1
Total D/P/L	5	5		10
GS	4	1	WMO (to Dec 95)	5
TOTAL	9	6		15